

## Community resources

[Follow us on Twitter](#) [Check our Reddit](#) [Twitter this](#) [Digg this page](#) [Contact us on IRC](#)

*courage is contagious*

## Viewing cable 09SANAA1882, HAMID AL-AHMAR TRIES HIS HAND AT COORDINATING

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

### Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

### Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#09SANAA1882**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">09SANAA1882</a>	<a href="#">2009-10-12 13:14</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">SECRET</a>	<a href="#">Embassy Sanaa</a>

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/9133>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/9134>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/9133>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/9143>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/9144>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/9145>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/10273>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/10271>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/10274>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/10271>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/10276>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/10276>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/10275>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/10276>  
<http://www.al-akhbar.com/node/10272>

VZCZCXRO7843  
RR RUEHDE RUEHDH RUEHDIR  
DE RUEHYN #1882/01 2851314  
ZNY SSSSS ZZH  
R 121314Z OCT 09  
FM AMEMBASSY SANAA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3002  
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE

RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 0108  
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT 0183  
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 0110  
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 1047  
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS 0362  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 0014  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC  
RHMCSUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 SANAA 001882

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/ARP AMACDONALD AND INR SMOFFATT  
NSC FOR AARON JOST  
OSD/POLICY FOR BRIAN GLENN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/12/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [SA](#) [SY](#) [GM](#) [EG](#) [TU](#) [LE](#) [YM](#)

SUBJECT: HAMID AL-AHMAR TRIES HIS HAND AT COORDINATING  
HOUTHI, SOUTHERN MOVEMENT EFFORTS

REF: A. SANAA 1847

[1](#)B. SANAA 1617

[1](#)C. SANAA 430

Classified By: CDA Angie Bryan for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (S) SUMMARY: Citing his desire to throw President Saleh off balance, Hamid al-Ahmar, prominent businessman, opposition leader, and de facto head of Yemen's largest tribal confederation, told EconOff on October 6 that he is trying to coordinate the efforts of the Houthi rebels and the Southern Movement. Ahmar said he had spoken recently to exiled MP Yahya al-Houthi, brother of rebel leader Abdulmalik al-Houthi, and met with Southern Movement leader Ali Nasser Mohammed in Damascus to encourage the two parties to work together and further stretch the ROYG's already strained military resources. By activating the southern front, Ahmar hoped to force the ROYG to shift military assets away from the Sa'ada conflict. In the context of his political party's Sunni orientation and his family's staunch support for the regime against the rebels, Ahmar's outreach to the (Shiite) Houthis is a risky strategy that, if revealed, could backfire for him politically. Ahmar gave no indication of either movement's willingness to entertain his suggestion that they collaborate against Saleh. This, much like his other anti-Saleh machinations, provides ample evidence that Ahmar views politics as much a game as a vocation. END SUMMARY.

CELL PHONE DIPLOMACY WITH HOUTHIS, SOUTHERN MOVEMENT  
-----

[1](#)2. (S) Hamid al-Ahmar (strictly protect), prominent businessman, Islah Party leader, and de facto head of the Hashid tribal confederation, told EconOff on October 6 that he is trying to coordinate the efforts of the Houthis with those of the Southern Movement in order to stretch the ROYG's scarce military resources and throw President Saleh off balance. Ahmar said he had spoken recently to Berlin-based MP Yahya al-Houthi, the exiled brother of rebel leader Abdulmalik al-Houthi, by telephone for "over an hour" to test the waters for future coordination with the Southern Movement. Ahmar said he had also met with Southern Movement leader Ali Nasser Mohammed at the Four Seasons Hotel in Damascus on or around September 26 to pitch him the idea of opening direct communication with the Houthis. Remaining vague on the details of how the two movements could collaborate, Ahmar said his goal was for the Southern Movement to be "more active" in coming weeks, forcing the ROYG to shift military assets to southern Yemen and away from the Sa'ada front, thus undermining the government's latest campaign against the Houthis.

[1](#)3. (S) Sounding positively giddy at the prospect of working

with the Houthis, Ahmar denied that he is seeking to lengthen the Sa'ada conflict, instead describing his latest anti-Saleh scheming as an attempt to create a temporary alliance between two parties opposed to Saleh's rule. "For me to actively support the Houthis would be too much, too evil," Ahmar told EconOff. "But at least I can coordinate their efforts with the Southern Movement's struggle." (Comment: Given the Islah Party's Sunni orientation and Hashid's historical support for the regime against the Houthis (REF A), Ahmar's outreach to the anti-regime Shiite rebels is a potentially embarrassing, high-wire act that, if revealed, could backfire politically for Ahmar and Islah. End Comment.)

¶4. (S) Ahmar expressed frustration at what he described as Yahya al-Houthi's lack of knowledge regarding key aspects of the Sa'ada conflict, but remained confident that Yahya could pass messages to his brother Abdulmalik al-Houthi on Ahmar's behalf. Dismissing the need to talk directly to Abdulmalik, whom he has described as a "criminal" in the past, Ahmar said that his conversation with Yahya was a "good start."

¶5. (S) Ahmar said he had also raised the idea of closer coordination with the Houthis in recent telephone

SANAA 00001882 002 OF 002

conversations with expatriate Southern Movement leaders Haidar Abubakr al-Attas and Ali Salem al-Baidh, but said nothing of their responsiveness to the idea. Ahmar lamented that the length of the ongoing Sa'ada conflict had not yet caused rank-and-file soldiers to turn against Saleh and his close relatives in the military, as he had predicted would occur (REF B). Outlining his next steps, Ahmar said he would lead a small delegation from the JMP-affiliated opposition National Dialogue Committee, which Ahmar chairs, to meet Southern Movement leaders (NFI) in Beirut or Cairo in the coming weeks. (Note: This could refer to upcoming Egyptian Government-hosted talks between the ROYG, the Southern Movement, and the Houthis, as reported by independent newspaper al-Masdar on October 8. End Note.)

COMMENT

-----

¶6. (S) Left conspicuously unsaid was the response of Yahya al-Houthi and Southern Movement leaders to Ahmar's suggestion that they collaborate actively. The Southern Movement does not need Hamid al-Ahmar as an intermediary to communicate directly with the Houthi leadership (REF C), nor does it take orders from him. The movement's willingness to communicate regularly with Ahmar, however, is in keeping with its alleged outreach to ideologically strange bedfellows, such as al-Qaeda. The feverish pace of Ahmar's anti-Saleh plotting, along with his almost schizophrenic change in attitudes towards his would-be political allies from one meeting to the next, gives the impression that Ahmar considers politics as much a game as a vocation. During a previous conversation, the Houthis were "extremists;" now Ahmar sees them as useful interlocutors. During an August 27 encounter, Northwest Regional Commander MG Ali Muhsin al-Ahmar was a "good and honest man" (REF B); during the October 6 meeting, Ahmar singled him out as a thoroughly corrupt official, siphoning off Yemen's oil wealth.

¶7. (S) Ahmar increasingly comes across as bored with his own immense wealth and extensive business dealings; politics, specifically ways to collude with Saleh's enemies, now command center stage. Business topics that used to receive his daily attention, such as the ROYG's draft telecommunications law and his desire to expand his chain of fast food restaurants, now are unworthy of even a passing mention during hours of conversation. In this vein, Ahmar's outreach to Yahya al-Houthi may represent an attempt to demonstrate his fearlessness vis--vis the regime rather than a part of any coherent political strategy. END COMMENT.

BRYAN